

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



# Children's Residential Care Update

## AUGUST 2006

### COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DIVISION CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE UPDATE

Summer is upon us, the season of sandy beaches, kayaking, barbequing and Shakespeare in the park. This is our third Children's Residential Care Update for 2006. The Updates continue to be an important method for sharing information. We appreciate your support in sharing these Updates with members in your organization and others interested in children's issues.

### REGULATION PACKAGES

The following regulation package for children's residential care facilities is currently in the process of being completed. If you have any questions regarding the proposed regulations, please contact the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD), Policy Development Bureau at (916) 324-4312. For copies of proposed regulations, contact the Office of Regulation Development (ORD) at (916) 657-2586 or visit their website at [www.dss.cahwnet.gov/ord/default.htm](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/ord/default.htm). Please note that depending on the version of software that you are currently using, it might be necessary to press your control key to activate the hyperlinks found throughout this document.

**Crisis Nursery Regulations:** As required by statute, CDSS has developed emergency regulations implementing SB 855, Chapter 664, Statutes of 2004. Crisis Nurseries are defined by statute as facilities providing short-term, 24-hour non-medical residential care and supervision for children under six years of age who are voluntarily placed for up to 30 days by their parent/guardians due to a family crisis or stressful situation. Also, county child welfare service agencies may temporarily place children in these facilities for no more than 14 days. Additional aspects of Crisis Nurseries are that they:

- may count fully trained volunteers in their staff-to-child ratio.
- have a maximum licensed capacity of 14.

- are required to provide a monthly report to CDSS indicating the total number of voluntarily placed children, the number of children placed by a child welfare services agency and length of stay for each child.
- may provide day care services for children less than six years of age at the same site as the Crisis Nursery.

As required by statute, CDSS has developed emergency regulations that establish minimum health and safety standards for children cared for by Crisis Nurseries. The intent of developing, adopting, and implementing Crisis Nursery Program Regulations is to provide a safe and supportive environment for children as well as a non-threatening, non-punitive resource for parents experiencing a crisis or stressful situation. The emergency regulations are expected to become effective by the end of the summer of 2006.

## **2006 FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONFERENCE**

CCLD and the California Alliance of Child and Family Services will once again co-sponsor the Foster Family Agency Conference. The theme of this year's conference is "Little Steps, Big Tomorrows." This conference will serve as an excellent opportunity for care providers and statewide licensing staff to share information on FFA issues.

The conference will take place on November 2nd & 3rd, 2006, at the San Gabriel Hilton Hotel which is located at 225 West Valley Blvd., San Gabriel, CA 91776. The telephone number for the hotel is (626) 270-2700. The registration fee is \$140 per person. All proceeds raised from the conference will provide scholarships to foster care youth in FFAs. Registration packets will be sent out in September. For more information, contact your local licensing office.

## **2006 GROUP HOME CONFERENCE**

CCLD and the California Alliance of Child and Family Services are co-sponsoring the second annual 2006 Group Home conference. The theme of this year's exciting conference is "The Face of Change." The conference will include workshops on legal, financial and regulatory issues pertaining to group homes. It will also present an opportunity for care providers and licensing staff to share general licensing information and recent trends in working with today's foster youth.

The conference will take place on September 28–29, 2006, at the Red Lion Hotel which is located at 1401 Arden Way, Sacramento, CA 95815. The telephone number for the hotel is (916) 922-8041. The registration fee is \$125 per person. All proceeds from registration fees and donations will be distributed to non-profit organizations that provide services to group home youth. Preliminary information has been sent to all group home providers. Registration material will be sent out in July 2006. For more information, please contact Janet Dupzyk at (916) 263-4711 or Carol Hibbard at (916) 263-4709, the co-chairs of this year's conference.

## **CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL REGULATION REVIEW**

In November 2005, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services held a hearing to discuss CCLD and its efforts to rebuild its licensing program. The primary purpose of the hearing was to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to identify areas of concern relative to issues affecting foster children.

During the hearing, many stakeholders voiced concern that the existing children's residential regulations contain provisions which do not promote a home-like environment. As a result, these provisions have become barriers to preparing foster youth for life as independent young adults. CCLD made a commitment that a review of the foster care regulations would be conducted.

This commitment led to the establishment of a stakeholders' workgroup. Members on the workgroup include CDSS staff and representatives from various children's advocacy groups. The goal of the workgroup is to make any necessary improvements to the regulations which would continue to ensure the promotion of self reliance and independence in children's residential care facilities. The workgroup's first meeting was held in Sacramento on May 17, 2006. For more information or to make comments and suggestions, please contact Roxanne Vincent at (916) 324-4508.

## **WATER SAFETY**

With the summer months upon us, licensees are reminded to use extreme caution when supervising children around water. Drowning is a major cause of death among children under five years of age in California. It can happen quickly and silently in as little as two inches of water. Extra supervision is important when children are near water – not just around pools and hot tubs, but also near buckets, wading pools, fountains and toilets. CCLD regulations require that licensees use covers or fencing to make pools and other bodies of water inaccessible to children.

## **COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DIVISION STAFF CHANGES**

**Bill Jordan** retired on May 31, 2006 after 32 years of State service. Bill had been with CCLD for more than 23 years and ended his State service career as Chief of the Caregiver Background Check Bureau. Bill's experience, dedication and leadership style will be sorely missed. In retirement, Bill does not plan on slowing down one bit. He plans on vacationing for two weeks in Ireland; obtaining a graduate degree in public policy; traveling; working for the Department in a part-time capacity; and redoing his backyard.

## **CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE PROGRAM STAFF CHANGES**

The Children's Residential Care Program is pleased to announce the appointment of **Robert Pate** as Program Administrator for the Children's Residential Program. Robert began his career with CCLD in 1980 as a Licensing Program Analyst. Prior to his appointment, Robert was the Assistant Program Administrator for the Children's Residential Program for two years. Robert assumed his new position in June 2006.

## **CHILDREN IN VEHICLES**

Licensees are responsible for providing supervision to children in facilities at all times. This responsibility includes never leaving children unattended in motor vehicles. On a warm, sunny day, even at temperatures as mild as 60 degrees Fahrenheit, a closed vehicle can heat up to dangerous levels within minutes, and children left in this environment can face serious injury or even death. Because heat affects children more quickly and severely than adults, they are especially vulnerable.

To address these dangers, the Unattended Child in Motor Vehicle Safety Act (also known as "Kaitlyn's Law") was incorporated into the California Vehicle Code (Division 6.7), and became effective on January 1, 2002. This law makes it an infraction, punishable by a fine of \$100, for a parent, guardian or other person responsible for a child six years of age or younger to leave that child in a motor vehicle without supervision.

Please be mindful of these increased summertime risks to children, and take the precautions necessary and provide the supervision required to keep children safe.

## **ALLERGY SEASON**

Due to an unusually late rainy winter and early warm spring, it is anticipated that this will be one of the worst seasons on record for allergies. What are allergies? "Allergies are diseases of the immune system that cause an overreaction to substances called allergens." When these allergens enter an individual's body, it can cause a variety of symptoms. These symptoms include: itchy or watery eyes; sneezing; runny, stuffy, or itchy nose; headache; fatigue; post nasal drip; swollen eyes; dark circles under the eyes; sore throat; insomnia; and irritability. The best way to prevent or minimize your allergy symptoms is to avoid allergens. Another way is to consult a physician regarding the appropriate medication to take. Please note, allergies should not be ignored as they can lead to nasal or ear infections.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), which estimates that 50 million Americans suffer from allergies, has published the top 100 worst places to live for people who suffer from allergies. Eight California cities are on this list. These cities and their ranks on the list are: Sacramento #8; Modesto #30; San Diego #31; Stockton #45; San Francisco #76; Los Angeles #81; Bakersfield #83; and Fresno #90. Last year these cities

were ranked #62, #48, #90, #57, #93, #99, #95, and #61 respectively. Experts recommend that anyone who lives in these cities should take precautions to lessen the impact of allergens both indoors and outdoors. For a list of these precautions and more information, please visit the AAFA website at <http://www.aafa.org>.

## **THE WEST NILE VIRUS LONG-TERM CARE RECOMMENDATIONS AND BROCHURE**

With the summer months upon us, many local media outlets have already featured stories on the potential health threats posed by the West Nile Virus (WNV). Experts believe WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. WNV is most often spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. While most infected people either have no symptoms or flu-like symptoms, the elderly and those with compromised immune symptoms are at greatest risk for serious illness. Persons with diabetes and hypertension also appear more likely to develop serious complications from WNV.

To assist licensees in dealing with the WNV threat, the California Department of Health Services (CDHS), Division of Communicable Disease Control, has prepared WNV guidelines for long-term care facilities. These guidelines can be accessed at the following CDHS web site: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/dcdc/disb/pdf/Long-term%20care%20facilities%20WNV%204-5-05.pdf>. Any questions should be directed to Jon Rosenberg, M.D., at [jrosenbe@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:jrosenbe@dhs.ca.gov) or Chris Cahill, M.S., R.N., at [ccahill@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:ccahill@dhs.ca.gov).

In general, licensees are reminded of the following WNV prevention tips:

- Drain standing water. Mosquitoes can hatch in as little as a half-inch of water.
- Keep mosquitoes outside by installing or repairing both window and door screens.
- Use an effective mosquito repellent containing ingredients such as DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Wear long pants and sleeves outdoors when practical.
- Try to avoid being outside at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active.
- If you find a dead bird, don't handle the body with your bare hands. Call your local health department to report the find and to obtain instructions on disposing of the body.

For continuously updated information on WNV, please see the CDHS web site at <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/> or the federal Centers for Disease Control web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>.

## RESIDENTIAL CARE STATISTICS

All of the statistics for licensed children's residential care facilities are now available online. When you visit the CCLD home page, click on the link on the left side of the page that is titled, "[Licensing Overview](#)." After clicking on "Licensing Overview," click on "Basic Statistics About Licensed Facilities." Then click on the first bullet that says, "Number of State Licensed Facilities, by County." Scroll to the end of the document for the statewide totals. Further breakouts by category and location are still available. Please direct your requests to Sarah Fernandes, Central Operations Branch, at (916) 327-2406. Directories can also be obtained from your local licensing office. Please see the attached list for phone numbers and locations of Children's Residential Care Program offices.

## SUMMARY

If you have questions about items included in this Update or suggestions for future topics, please contact Barbara Rooney, Chief of the Technical Assistance and Policy Branch at (916) 657-2346. Also, please visit our website at [www.cclid.ca.gov](http://www.cclid.ca.gov) to obtain copies of Updates, office locations, provider letters, regulations, or to learn more about licensing services.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

JO FREDERICK  
Deputy Director  
Community Care Licensing Division

Enclosure